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OFFICIAL REPLY

OF THE

Presbyterian Ch. in U.S. Ch.
BOARD OF MISSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

TO

SIX LETTERS

OF THE

REV. ABSALOM PETERS,

Corresponding Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society,

ENTITLED,

"A Plea for Union in the West:"

PUBLISHED IN THE

"CINCINNATI JOURNAL,"

IN THE COURSE OF THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY LAST.



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1831.

AN OFFICIAL REPLY,

&c.

To the Christian Public.

It is with no ordinary feelings of regret and anxiety, that the Board of Missions appear before the Christian community, at the present time, in the attitude of *self-defence*, as respondents to certain allegations contained in the above named letters. Had these allegations been of a light and trivial nature in themselves—had they been founded on publications which had not been duly authorized and sanctioned by the Board—or had they proceeded from the pen of a private individual, sustaining to the Christian community the relations and responsibilities simply of an ordinary minister of the gospel, we might consistently have passed over in silence, although we could not have read without emotions of grief and surprise, the unexpected productions which now engage our attention—But this is not the case. The allegations made, are of a very grave and serious nature; they are founded on two formal and official documents, both of which were duly authorized and sanctioned by the Board of Missions, and one of which was “*accepted and adopted*,” with great unanimity, by the General Assembly, and put into the hands of our Ex. Committee for publication and distribution throughout the churches. The author of these allegations is not only an ordained minister in the Presbyterian church, but he, also, sustains to an important national missionary institution, a very high, and sacred, and official relation—and although they are not given to the public in the usual form of strictly official communications, yet they are sanctioned by the *name* of a gentleman who is universally known and recognised as the official organ and agent of the American Home Missionary Society—and are in accordance with the “*counsel*” of his “*esteemed associates in the Home Missionary enterprise, and other valued friends of the cause*,” as Mr. P. explicitly declares in the first part of his second letter.

These allegations, it appears from the same letter, were not brought before the public incautiously, or in haste, but after the apprehended “impropriety and inaccuracy of its statements” [those of our last annual report] had been “reflected on” for more than six months, with “unmingled regret.” This was also done under a deep impression of the solemn responsibilities involved, and of the consequences which might ensue. “We know,” continues the writer, “we know that such an exposure may occasion a malignant satisfaction in the minds of opposers; and we regret its necessity, especially at the present time, when the eyes of an infidel world are watching with eagerness for the halting of Christians. But if the enemies of Christianity, and of the benevolent efforts of the day, must have occasion to reproach the professed followers of Christ, let them be compelled to do so in full view of the fact, that ourselves are the first to expose every error in the church or its members, which cannot be otherwise corrected. It is our solemn

impression that no fears as to the consequences, ought to bear the weight of a feather against our high and holy obligations, as Christians, to *provide things honest in the sight of all men*. I cannot, therefore, convince myself that, on account of the delicacy of my official relations, it is any longer my duty, as an individual, to shrink from the responsibilities of a step which a just regard to the honour and purity of our benevolent institutions appears so imperiously to demand."

Although the Secretary, in the last sentence above quoted, speaks of himself as "*an individual*," yet he seems to have been fully aware of "*the delicacy of his official relations*," and of the extreme difficulty of addressing the public over his own proper signature, without necessarily involving the Society he serves, in the responsibilities incurred. He sometimes speaks in the *singular*, and sometimes in the *plural* number; and we are greatly at a loss to determine, when he employs the terms "*we*," "*ourselves*," &c. whether he intends to speak of himself as *an individual*, or in the name of his "*valued friends in the ministry*," or of the Society whose plans and operations are said to have been "*misrepresented*." We are entirely convinced, however, that the letters of Mr. P. as they have been presented to the public, will be regarded generally, in the same light as they would have been, had he actually appended to his name, his usual title of Corresponding Secretary.

Under such circumstances we cannot remain silent, without a tacit acknowledgment of the justice and propriety of charges—plainly and deeply implicating our character and conduct as men, as christians, and as servants of the churches—of charges, which go directly to impeach publicly, all the "*exclusive friends*" of the Board, their Western Agents, and "*the highest judicatory of the church itself*." For such charges we are sure there is no real foundation; and of this fact we hope entirely to satisfy the public mind. We have been deeply afflicted to find ourselves repeatedly assailed in Mr. P.'s letters, with the unholy weapons of irony and sarcasm; but these we shall studiously avoid in our reply.

We present, in the first place,—

THE CHARGES ALLEGED AGAINST THE BOARD OF MISSIONS.

These we shall exhibit in the very words of Mr. P. as we find them in various parts of the letters, entitled "*A Plea for Union in the West*." In the first letter the Board are charged with having made "*several statements*," "*injurious in their tendency*," and "*not sustained by facts*,"—"assertions," which the writer says, "*it is my duty publicly to disprove*." Of one statement in the letter of the Board, he says—"so far from its having the *slightest foundation in fact*, the *very reverse* of this statement *is true*." Again he says—"These statements I have hastily selected from the letter under consideration, as *specimens of the erroneous representations with which it abounds*."

In the second and third letters the Board is charged with "*assumed authority*"—"responsibility which *disregards the authority* of Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods,"—a "*sentence*" "*written for effect*" or "*intended as a hyperbole*;" "*a cluster of errors*" "*incautiously thrown before the public, over the signature of an individual, claiming the authority of the highest judicatory of the church*."

In his fourth letter, Mr. P. complains, "*that representations unfavourable to the A. H. M. S. have been industriously circulated by some*

of the zealous *partizans* of the Board, in the West," and throws out against our Cor. Secretary, the following unwarranted insinuation—"If the Secretary of the Board, in the '*extensive correspondence*' which he claims to have held with *pastors, churches, &c.* in the West, has *taken as much pains*, as in the letter under review, [the official letter of the Board,] to *depreciate* the character and doings of the Society, it is *no marvel*, if, under the *misapprehensions produced by such influences*, some individuals and churches *have been excited to address to the Board of Missions 'assurances of strong attachment and decided preference,'* and also to express their '*decided opposition to a united agency for missionary purposes.*'"

In his fifth letter, Mr. P. charges the Board with entering into "details to *depreciate* the doings of the A. H. M. Society, and to magnify those of the Board—with "erroneous assertions," and "depreciating comparisons" "as foreign as possible from the position to be proved." He affirms positively, that "the Board of Missions has adopted, and prosecuted its plan of operations *irrespective of previous organizations* for missionary purposes," and then says—"Here, then, is the true reason why the Board of Missions has had none of those large and efficient auxiliaries which have so much aided the A. H. M. Society." Further quotations might be given from the letters, but these are sufficient to exhibit the very serious nature of the charges which have been publicly alleged by Mr. P. against the Board; and that no injustice may be done to the writer, our readers are earnestly requested to refer to the letters named, and examine the foregoing quotations in the several connexions in which they may be found. We shall leave it for others to decide, whether it is proper and becoming for the Christian, under any circumstances, to employ such language, and publish it to the world, respecting the character and conduct of his fellow Christians. Certain we are, that no just provocation to such severity was given in the letter of the Board, or in their Annual Report; and we hope to be preserved, in the present communication, from any thing which may bear the slightest resemblance to it. Whether there be any *real foundation* for charges against the Board of so injurious and alarming a character, the public will be the better able to judge, after a candid and careful consideration of the following—

FACTS AND EXPLANATIONS.

1. As to the "*assumed authority of Mr. R.'s letter.*" It is a *fact* that the Secretary of the Board of Missions, was *directed*, by a vote of the Board, to do, precisely what was done. He *assumed* no authority; nor was there any assumption of authority on the part of the Board itself. It is well known to Mr. Peters, and to all reflecting men in the church, that the duties and responsibilities of conducting the missionary operations of the General Assembly, devolve almost entirely on the members of the Board residing in Philadelphia. Distant members are not required or expected to attend the monthly meetings of the Board, and this would manifestly be impracticable, and as the members in the city were duly notified, and as more than twice the number necessary to form a quorum, actually did attend the meeting, at which the letter was directed to be prepared, it is difficult for us to account for the remarks of Mr. P. on this subject; nor shall we, indeed, attempt it. Let the remarks of Mr. P. on this subject be carefully re-examined, and let every man form his own judgment of the "object."

2. As to the "OBJECT OF THE LETTER:"—

The *object* of the letter has not been misapprehended by Mr. P.—It was *expressly designed to discourage all further attempts to effect a union in the West*, between the Assembly's Board, and the A. H. M. Society—and this object was openly and frankly *avowed* in the letter itself, which consisted almost entirely of *reasons*, which the Board deemed satisfactory, why such attempts should be utterly abandoned. The relevancy and weight of those reasons are still perfectly apparent to the Board, and to its numerous patrons and friends in the West; and so entirely confident are we of the *conviction* they will carry to every candid mind, that we shall pass by, without any extended remarks, the greater portion of those two entire letters of Mr. Peters, which are designed as a reply to them.

In the part of Mr. P.'s second letter, now under consideration, there are, however, a few *incidental remarks*, which we cannot forbear briefly to notice, in reference to the efforts of the H. M. Society to promote union, and the "opposition of the Secretary and Agents of the Board of Missions" to their "plans." It is, indeed, true, that opposition to the "*plan*" of union proposed by Mr. Peters, has uniformly been avowed and manifested by the Board and its agents. The *reasons* of that opposition are assigned in our communication to the Presbytery of Cincinnati, and it is unnecessary here to repeat them. But let it not be supposed, for a moment, that we are opposed to the *purity* and *peace* of the Western churches. Far, very far from it. We are averse to the "*plan*" of union, because we are "*fully persuaded*" that it is not a good one, not feasible, by no means calculated to diminish, but *greatly to increase* the "*collisions*" complained of by Mr. Peters. This opinion was expressed by the Board in their letter, and they declared also that they were fully convinced, that the proposed union would be "utterly disapproved and rejected by a large number of the Presbyteries, and a still larger number of the Sessions and Congregations in the West." The correctness of these opinions Mr. P. explicitly denies, and casts upon the Board and its agents the blame of "nearly all the divisions which now exist in those churches." The most direct way to settle this question, will be to let the people of the West speak for themselves. We shall therefore present in this connexion, a *few* of the *many documents* on which the opinion of the Board is founded.

1. THE OPINION OF INDIVIDUALS IN OHIO, RESPECTING THE PROPOSED UNION.

The following communication, signed by *twelve* ministers and *four* elders in Ohio, dated September 10th, 1830, was received at this Office early in November, and duly laid before the Board.

Ohio, September 10th, 1830.

To the Board of Missions of the General Assembly.

The undersigned, wishing you prosperity and peace, desire to inform you, that we rejoice in the increased extent and success of your missionary operations. And we trust the Great Head of the church will, by your instrumentality, more and more bless the destitutions and vacant churches of our denomination. We rejoice in the increasing confidence manifested by so many of the churches and individuals of our connexion, in your fidelity and energy; evidenced by expressions of approbation and liberal contributions, our prayer and hope is, that

this confidence, and these contributions, may be increased an hundred fold, if necessary, until the whole energies of our denomination, so far as respects domestic missions, shall be concentrated in your Board, the regularly constituted organ for this work. We sincerely regret that there should be any hindrances to your full and free operations throughout the whole extent of the Presbyterian church in these United States. And it is with increased dissatisfaction that we notice the *continued efforts* of the Home Missionary Society, to counteract your measures, or to coerce you into a *subordinate connexion*. Towards *that* institution, we could wish to cherish no feeling but that of kindly remembrance of the good it had been instrumental of doing in the extreme exigency of the case. But its early and strong opposition to the reorganization of your body—its unceasing attempts ever since, to thwart your measures, or consolidate them with its own, have greatly lowered it in our opinion. Besides, we hesitate not to say, that under *present circumstances*, we view the operations of this *non-ecclesiastical institution*, within our church, as unconstitutional and intrusive. To the church herself (of every denomination) belongs the duty and privilege of cherishing and providing for her feeble and destitute portions. To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church specially, is *constitutionally* confided the missionary operations within her jurisdiction. Your Board is the constituted organ to effect this object. And while with wisdom, integrity, and zeal, you persevere in the course you are now pursuing, you will, we believe, have the confidence, the prayers, and the alms of the churches, under God, to sustain you. But any surrender by you, of the *rights* of the church, to institutions unknown to our church constitution, will *greatly weaken* the confidence of many Presbyterians in your integrity, and slacken their exertions for your support. The increasing innovations of late years, upon both the principles and discipline of our church, has become alarming to many, in their view endangering its peace and unity. Even now, the evil is seen and felt to an extent and degree, that nothing but a return and strict adherence to *first principles*, can remove: so we believe, and therefore speak: unwilling any longer, by our silence, to connive at what we believe to be of injurious tendency to the doctrines and government of that church, the *vows* of which are upon us. This communication, as we design it for your encouragement, so we are cordially willing that it should have publicity given to it, believing that, substantially, it expresses the views of *many others* in the Presbyterian church, as well as those of the undersigned ministers and elders of that communion.

Very respectfully, &c.

2. RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF STEUBENVILLE, OHIO.

Mount Pleasant, October 6th, 1830.

SESSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF STEUBENVILLE.

“Resolved, unanimously, That we view the transaction of Missionary business to be especially the duty of the church, in her distinctive character. That we consider the present organization of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly, as most consistent with the order which should be taken in this matter—and hope, that that institution will continue and prosper. That it is most proper, that this Presbytery be an Auxiliary to that Board,” &c. &c.

A true extract.

CHARLES CLINTON BEATTY, *Stated Clerk*.

3. RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF LANCASTER, OHIO.

Zanesville, October 22, 1830.

SESSIONS OF THE LANCASTER PRESBYTERY.

"Whereas repeated efforts have been made, and are likely to be renewed, intended to produce an amalgamation of the Assembly's Board of Missions and the A. H. M. Society; and whereas this Presbytery do, on many accounts, feel opposed to any amalgamation, which would change the principles, character, and responsibility of the Assembly's Board,—

Therefore, Resolved, 1st. That we deem any amalgamation of these Boards, as unnecessary, undesirable, and highly inexpedient.

2d. That we view with regret and disapprobation, the efforts repeatedly made to produce this amalgamation; and hope, for the peace of the church, these efforts will be speedily discontinued.

3d. That a copy of this preamble and these resolutions, be forwarded by the Stated Clerk, for publication in the *Missionary Reporter*."

"To this decision, Messrs. Miles, Putnam and Whitehead entered their dissent,"

A true extract.

[Attest,]

JAMES CULBERTSON, *Stated Clerk*.

4. RESOLUTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF RICHLAND, OHIO.

Mansfield, (Ohio,) September 30, 1830.

Rev. and dear Sir,—The Presbytery of Richland, in session at Canton, on Thursday, the 16th inst. adopted the following resolution:—

"Resolved, That this Presbytery express their hearty approbation of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly, in its onward course of efficiency and success, since its reorganization in 1828. This is as it should be—this Board being the regularly constituted organ for conducting missionary operations within the Presbyterian church. This Presbytery feel also that they are called, from the circumstances of the times, to express their decided disapprobation of the attempts made and making, in various quarters, to produce an amalgamation of the Assembly's Board with the A. H. M. Society—a measure which this Presbytery would deprecate as a violation of both the spirit and letter of our well devised form of church government:—so many inroads upon which have already been made, that it has, in view of this Presbytery, become indispensably necessary for all that wish to preserve inviolate the principles of government of the Presbyterian church, to take a decided and open stand in their maintenance, and in openly disapproving of all such measures as tend to weaken or impair the soundness of the one or the efficiency of the other. Such is the tendency, it is believed, of the operations of the Home Missionary Society in its distinctive, independent, and non-ecclesiastical character, within the Presbyterian church."

"Resolved, That a copy of the above resolution be sent to the Assembly's Board of Missions by the Stated Clerk."

A true copy.

JAMES ROWLAND, *Stated Clerk*.

These formal and official documents may serve as "specimens" of the sentiments entertained by some of the brethren of the West, and of the manner in which those sentiments have been, from time to time,

expressed to the Board. We might add to these a number of communications from highly respected and influential individuals in the West, of a similar import; but we deem it unnecessary. In the language of Mr. Peters, "*they will doubtless adopt such measures as they may judge expedient, to make known to the General Assembly, and to the Christian public, the true state of facts and their own wishes, on a subject involving interests so immensely important.*"

5. AS TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE LETTER OF THE BOARD.

In his first letter, Mr. Peters uses the following very extraordinary language in reference to this letter:—"I do most unfeignedly regret that an opportunity was not afforded of correcting these statements before they were given to the public." "But that privilege was not allowed to us." "Why is it that this letter is brought before the public without its counterpart?" The plain import of these declarations is, that Mr. P. has been denied a *privilege*, and that the Christian public have been deprived of information, which the Board were sacredly bound to give. A few facts, in reference to the origin and publication of this letter, will serve to show whether there be any real cause for these complaints. Let it then be distinctly understood, that *neither the Board of Missions, nor its Secretary, nor its Ex. Committee, have had any concern whatever in the publication of this letter or its counterpart!* On the contrary, it was *formally determined by the Board, that they would publish neither.* They did, however, suppose, that the General Assembly had fully authorized them to *answer*, in a respectful manner, the communication of the Cincinnati Presbytery; and they did not once suspect that they were encroaching either upon the prerogative or the "*privilege*" of Mr. Peters, when they ventured to forward their reply, without submitting it to him for "*correction!*" The letter of the Board first appeared in the "Cincinnati Christian Journal;" and we have since been informed, that it was published at the particular request of *one of the Committee to whom it was addressed*, on his own responsibility: and although this fact occurred several months ago, the letter has never yet been RE-PUBLISHED by the Board. The Letter of the Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery was published in the same paper, Dec. 31, 1830, *at the particular request of Mr. Peters*; and this has been preceded and followed by *six letters* from Mr. P., containing the very serious charges, and the alarming "*exposure*" before alluded to. Still, however, the Board have till now maintained a profound silence. They have "*published*" nothing, and they would probably have continued to be silent, had they not been constrained by a sense of duty to themselves, to the churches in the West, and to the General Assembly, whose servants they are, to publish the facts and explanations which are contained in this communication. In view of these facts, *on whom*, we ask, rests the *responsibility* of the unprovoked attack which has been made, publicly, upon the Board, its Secretary, its Western Agents, and upon the General Assembly itself?—and *where*, we ask again, has Mr. P. found his authority for the declaration with which he commences his "STRICTURES ON THE LAST REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MISSIONS," "*We are invited carefully to analyze the report of the Board?*" The Board did, indeed, say, in their communication to the *Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery*; "By carefully analyzing these Reports it will be found, &c."—but was this an "*invitation*" addressed to Mr. Peters? Is Mr. P. *identified* with that Committee? If not, why this "assumption" of affinity? Is

there any thing here to justify either the *matter* or the *manner* of the "strictures" upon a report which was read to the General Assembly, "carefully examined" by a committee of five, and then deliberately "adopted, and put into the hands of the Ex. Committee for publication?" Mr. P. not only affirms, "*we are invited*," but he continues, "This reminds me of a duty, Mr. Editor, which I have perhaps too long neglected, and to which I confess I have come with the greatest reluctance. Soon after the publication of the above Report, I did *carefully analyze* some portions of it for my own satisfaction. The result was unexpectedly painful."

May we not inquire, by whom this *duty* was imposed upon the Secretary of the A. H. M. Society? Was it by the Assembly? No record can be found in the minutes of that venerable body, authorizing and appointing Mr. P. to this "painful" office. Was it by the constitution of the Society which he serves? We can find nothing there which imposes such an *obligation*. We differ entirely with the Secretary, in his "view of duty, too long neglected," and we are verily persuaded, that, "on account of the delicacy of his official relations," he would have been held *entirely guiltless*, had he *altogether neglected* to make these unjustifiable strictures upon our last Annual Report. The *duty* (if there were any) assumed and discharged, with the "*greatest reluctance*," by Mr. Peters, belonged to the *Committee* with whom the Board were in correspondence. Our letter was addressed to *them*, in their *official character*, and to them exclusively. They were referred to the reports of the two Boards, for the import and correctness of our statements; and it belonged to *them alone*, to detect the "errors," and correct the "misrepresentations," with which Mr. P. affirms that our letter "*abounds*." Had they been left to speak for themselves, it is not at all probable, that the public would ever have been afflicted by "an exposure which may occasion a malignant satisfaction in the minds of opposers."

6. AS TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE CINCINNATI PRESBYTERY.

In his second letter Mr. P. alludes briefly to the appointment of this Committee "to address the Board of Missions, and urge them to unite with the A. H. M. Society in the appointment of a common agency;" but he has omitted to inform the public, *that he himself was present at the meeting of the Presbytery*, and "*urged them*" to make the appointment. Of the prominent part which Mr. Peters took in that meeting of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, in July last, at which the above named Committee were appointed, we have received from a responsible individual, who was present, the following account—viz.

"On Monday afternoon, during the interval of worship, and on Tuesday, Mr. Peters spoke before Presbytery in favour of the *union* in the West between the two Boards of which you have heard so much. He commenced by reading an extract or extracts, if not all contained in pages 55, 56, of their last Report, making, in the meantime, his shrewd remarks upon them. He spoke of the plan of union in detail, which was referred to a respectable committee of the Assembly, and then dismissed without a proper and righteous investigation, and also of the feasibility of this plan. He then adverted to a resolution which the Board of Missions passed some time before the sitting of the Assembly—after hearing of the Committee of Agency for the Home Missionary in the West—not to unite with them. He spoke of the protest which was signed by a number of *great names*, some of whom were

mentioned; of the proceedings of the Assembly in dismissing the subject of a plan of union in the West, *as they did*; and last of all, he expatiated very pathetically and feelingly on the evils growing out of the separate action of the two Boards—and remarked that he would spend his life, if need be, in effecting this union. These are the points upon which he dwelt in his speech. The manner he treated them, as you will readily apprehend, was well calculated to seize upon the feelings of the members of Presbytery.”

Now, if it be true that Mr. P. travelled from New York to Ohio, to attend the meeting of the Presbytery of Cincinnati—that he occupied parts of two days, in publicly advocating a plan of union which had already been rejected by the Board of Missions, and also by the General Assembly, and in *publicly animadverting upon a private resolution of the Board, and the doings of the Assembly itself*—it is surely “no marvel,” that the Presbytery were at length prevailed upon by the pathetic and solemn appeals and entreaties of Mr. P. to appoint this Committee. But it is “*truly amazing!*” after all this, to find in his letters repeated declarations respecting the “unfeigned regret,” and the “unspeakable reluctance,” with which he entered, six months after, upon the discharge of his “long neglected duty;” and above all, to hear him say, “the *blame* of having brought this discussion before the public belongs not to *me!*” If the journey of Mr. P. to Ohio, and his open attack upon the unpublished resolution of the Board, and the proceedings of the Assembly, before the Cincinnati Presbytery, does not amount to “bringing this discussion before the public,” then we have yet to learn what *publicity* means.

7. FACTS IN RELATION TO MR. P.’S “CORRECTIONS.”

In closing his third letter, Mr. Peters says—“Thus I have found occasion for a whole letter, to correct *four sentences* in the article under review; and I cannot bring it to a close without expressing my unfeigned regret that such a *cluster of errors* have been incautiously thrown before the public, over the signature of an individual claiming the authority of the *highest judicatory of the church.*”

The “four sentences,” which Mr. P. has found it so arduous a task to “correct,” read in connexion, as follows:—“The one, [the B. of Missions,] is strictly *ecclesiastical*, the other, [the A. H. M. S.,] as strictly voluntary. The one is directly responsible to the highest judicatory of the church for all its acts, and is in all respects, under its immediate and constant supervision and control; the other is responsible only to a small number of private individuals, and those too widely scattered over the country, and actually at variance in their views of doctrines, discipline, and ecclesiastical polity. The one proposes to conduct all its distant operations chiefly by the agency of Sessions and Presbyteries, the other by voluntary associations and agencies, wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories.”

These “four sentences,” express clearly, and without reserve, the deliberate opinions of the Board from which they emanated, and by which they have been fully sanctioned; and notwithstanding the protracted reasonings and bold assertions of Mr. P. respecting their incorrectness, our opinions remain unaltered, and we find no occasion to retract a single sentence. The Board, as well as Mr. Peters, have examined for themselves, the Constitution of the Church, and that also of the A. H. M. S., and they have also investigated with care, the system of organi-

zation, the plan of operations, and the principle of responsibility chosen, recommended, and published by that Society, and diligently compared them with those of the Board, and the conclusions to which they have been conducted, are fairly stated in the passage above quoted from their letter. It would not comport with the primary object of this reply, nor do the Board deem it at all necessary, to enter into an argument, to prove what Mr. Peters plainly denies—the *constitutional power of the General Assembly*, to appoint a “*permanent Board* to appoint Missionaries during the year.” We shall take it for granted, that the Assembly understand their own Constitution, and that they have not been engaged for nearly half a century, in conducting the Missionary operations of the Presbyterian church, without having paused to inquire whether they were empowered by their Constitution so to do. If the Assembly have transcended their constitutional powers, and appointed a permanent *Board* without *authority*, we must leave them to answer for themselves.

“CORRECTION SECOND” involves another *constitutional* question, and here again we must leave the Assembly to make its own defence.

“CORRECTION THIRD,” requires a passing remark. The subject of *correction* here, is the clause which asserts that the A. H. M. S. is “*responsible only to a small number of private individuals, &c.*” “Did not the writer know,” says Mr. P., “that the A. H. M. S. is composed of all who contribute annually to its funds, and these are perhaps *twenty thousand individuals* in a year?” “And is not the Society responsible to its own members?” Certainly the Board were fully aware of all this—but may we not still ask in reply, Did not the writer of this “*correction*” know, that the Board of Missions was appointed by the *representatives* of the whole Presbyterian church in these United States, embracing in its communion nearly 200,000 members, and in its congregations, probably not less than *half a million* of souls? And is not the Board responsible to the whole church by which it was appointed? And did not Mr. Peters know, that “perhaps twenty thousand individuals,” is a “*small number*,” in comparison with *half a million*? It might be asked again, how many of the *twenty thousand contributors*, are generally present at the anniversaries of the A. H. M. S., to hear their reports, to share in their proceedings, and to inquire into the propriety of their operations? Certainly if there be *hundreds* present on those occasions, there are always *thousands* absent, and then, *according to the reasonings of Mr. P.*, respecting the “assumed authority of Mr. R.’s letter,” there is no responsibility at all, because there being only a small *minority* of the members convened, they cannot be properly styled the A. H. M. Society. Such are the legitimate results of Mr. P.’s own principles, when applied to his own case. But admitting that the Society is responsible to its members, and that these amount to 20,000, still it is strictly, literally true, in the comparison instituted, “that it is responsible only to a small number of private individuals,” while the Board of Missions is as truly responsible to the whole church, annually represented in the General Assembly.

As to the responsibility of the Society to “*Churches, Presbyteries, and Synods*,” the Board differ entirely from Mr. P. in opinion, and that too, after having duly considered the “*Stipulations, Resolutions, &c.*” appended to the Annual Reports of the Society—and as these reports are “widely circulated,” they would just refer the Christian public to these, and to the Annual Reports of the Board, for all the information

necessary to enable them to form an accurate judgment of the *nature* of the *responsibilities* implied.

"CORRECTION FOURTH."—In reference to the assertion of the Board, that the A. H. M. Society "proposes to conduct its distant operations by voluntary associations and agencies wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories," Mr. P. says, "I am not aware that this declaration has the slightest foundation in fact. If it have, will the Secretary of the Board direct us to the evidence?" The evidence is abundant, provided it be admitted, that the Society "*proposes*," or intends to do, what it actually does—or, in other words, that the *doings* of the Society are in strict accordance with a preconceived plan of operations. It will probably be denied by none, that the *Society itself* is a voluntary association, "*wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories*," and according to its title, its jurisdiction is co-extensive with America. So far, then, as the *Society* acts, our affirmation is unquestionably true. The *agencies* also, established at Utica and Geneva, N. Y., and Cincinnati, Ohio, for the whole Valley of the Mississippi, "are strictly voluntary, and wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories." This, it is believed, is also true of the Missionary Societies of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Hampshire,—and by *these associations and agencies*, "the distant operations of the A. H. M. Society" are actually conducted, as the annual reports abundantly demonstrate. The evidence is therefore clear and conclusive; and the declaration of the Board is founded on *existing facts*.

The "QUERY" which precedes the "fourth correction" is fully answered in our last Annual Report, pages 15 to 20; and to that report the public are referred, for all that need be said on the subject. We shall take occasion, in another part of this communication, to show that the "*distant operations*" of the *Board* are not "*conducted in the same manner*," but in a manner *widely different* from those of the Society.

In his fourth letter, Mr. P. contents himself chiefly with direct *contradictions* of the Board, and an appearance of reasoning in support of the three positions assumed—"dissolution of auxiliaries *not* required,"—"union *desired* in the West,"—and "Increase of evils *not* to be apprehended." On the subject of "*union desired*," we have before given ample "specimens" of the explicit expressions of sentiment which have been forwarded to the Board by *the people of the West*, and on the other two points, we deem it unnecessary, at present, to say any thing more than we have said already in our letter. *All the direct charges* contained in this whole letter against the Board, its Secretary and Agents, and other "exclusive friends," may be reduced to the four following:—1. *Injustice* to the churches west of the Alleghanies.—2. *Slanders* "industriously circulated" against the A. H. M. Society.—3. *Misrepresentations*, and 4. Unyielding *opposition* to the wishes of Presbyteries and Synods, and to the peace of the Western churches. To these charges we plead *not guilty*, and cheerfully commit the whole matter as it is, to an ingenuous Christian public for adjudication; not because we are incapable of offering a vindication of our conduct in the matters involved, but because we deem such a vindication unnecessary—and because it is the grand object of our communication, to refute the still more serious charges which have been alleged against us in the last two letters of Mr. Peters.

8. FACTS IN REFERENCE TO THE "ERRONEOUS ASSERTIONS."

The portion of our letter embraced under this head, is as follows:—

"By carefully analyzing these reports [the last Annual Reports of the Board, and of the A. H. M. Society,] it will be found that the Board of Missions have actually sent into the field, during the last year, a larger number of missionaries than the A. H. M. Society as *such* has done. Of the 392 missionaries reported by the latter Society, it will be found that 196 are employed and sustained, not by the Parent Society, but by auxiliary societies, most of which were in successful operation, long before the A. H. M. Society was formed." "This *comparison is not instituted either for the purpose of detracting from the merits of the A. H. M. Society, or boasting of the success which has crowned the humble efforts of the Board of Missions; but it is instituted simply for the purpose of presenting more distinctly to your view, interesting facts in reference to both these favoured institutions.*"

The *design* of this brief comparison is so explicitly and kindly expressed by the Board, that they were greatly surprised and grieved, not only to find the *truth* of their *positive declarations* called in question, and their motives suspected, but also to find themselves directly accused of having "*entered into details to depreciate the doings of the A. H. M. Society, and to magnify those of the Board.*" Here it will be distinctly perceived, that Mr. Peters and the Board are directly at *issue*, and that too, on a point involving the secret feelings and motives of the heart. If these secret feelings and motives of our hearts, are better known to Mr. Peters than they are to ourselves, and if the Christian public are prepared to accredit his suspicions and assertions, rather than our own candid and sober declarations; then we fully agree with Mr. Peters in the opinion expressed in his last letter, that "*it is surely time for the 170 members of the Board of Missions to give their attention to this matter, and by interposing their authority, to put a stop to misrepresentations, so manifestly tending to mislead the public mind!*" But if it be admitted that the Board are *capable in any case*, of being '*honest*,' and *speaking truth*, and that they are, on the whole, better qualified to ascertain and express their own *motives* of action, than Mr. Peters, or any other man; then, in the case under consideration, and in all others of a similar nature, found in Mr. P.'s letters, we have no doubt that the Christian public will give an enlightened and righteous judgment: and they will decide also for themselves, whether such "*accusations of the brethren*" ought to be countenanced and sustained.

But, leaving these secondary topics, we come now to the *subject matter* of those "*specimens of the erroneous representation*," with which Mr. P. affirms, that the letter of the Board "*abounds.*"

1st Specimen.—"*The Board of Missions have actually sent into the field, during the last year, a larger number of missionaries than the A. H. M. Society, as such, has done.*" "This statement," says Mr. P. "*is truly amazing*, and I must be permitted to say, that so far from its *having the slightest foundation in fact*, the very reverse of this statement is true."

2d Specimen—"Of the 392 missionaries reported by the latter Society, it will be found that 196 are '*employed*' and '*sustained*,' not by the Parent Society, but by auxiliary Societies, most of which were in successful operation, long before the A. H. M. Society was formed."

3d Specimen.—“The 198 reported by the Assembly’s Board, are all employed and sustained by the Board alone, without the agency of a single auxiliary of the kind just named.”

For the import and correctness of these declarations, the *Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery* were referred to the two last Annual Reports of the Board and Society; nay, *they* were “*invited*” carefully to “*analyze*” them. Our comparison was brief, general, and by no means invidious; and we thought it most fair, candid and honourable, to express our own opinion of the contents of the reports, in this particular, and then leave the committee to base their opinion on a *careful analysis*. Had we really intended to “misrepresent” and “depreciate” the Society, and to “swell” and “magnify” the doings of the Board, as Mr. P. has accused us of doing, it seems hardly rational to suppose, that we would have directed the attention of the committee to the very documents, which on a “*first perusal*,” must have carried to their minds the “*deep impression*” which Mr. P. received, of the incorrectness of our statements. Of the *intention* to misrepresent and deceive, we hope, then, to be acquitted.

The *facts* upon which our opinion was founded, were derived from the Reports of the A. H. M. Society, and the reports of its auxiliaries. To these *facts* the attention of our Secretary, and subsequently that of the Board, was first directed, by a lay member of the Board. In the last Report of the A. H. M. Society, page 11, under the head of “EXPLANATIONS,” the Board found the following sentence,—“The following abbreviations appended to the names of missionaries in the second column, designate the auxiliary societies, *by whose funds* the congregations and missionary stations, against which they are placed, *have been aided*.” The plain meaning of this declaration, is precisely the same, as that of the term “*sustained*,” as used by the Board. Guided by this explanation, the names of the “missionaries thus *sustained*,” or of the “congregations and missionary stations aided,” were carefully counted, and the number was found to be precisely what was stated, 196. If, in this particular, the *Board* have erred, it was owing entirely to the explicit instructions of the Secretary of the Society. But they used in their letter, also, the term “*employed*,” and this, certainly is not found in the explanation of the abbreviations; but it is a fact, that *both of these offensive terms* are used repeatedly, in other parts of the reports, both of the “Parent Society” and of its auxiliaries. Thus in the Report for 1828, pages 65 to 68, the “Western Agency” in their Report to the Parent Society, speak of “a list of the names and locations of the missionaries within this agency, with the amount of aid granted to each, and the date and period of his appointment.” Again—“The aggregate expense of these missionaries to *our funds*, for the year, including the compensation of the Agent of the A. H. M. Society, (who is also the Secretary of this Board) together with the incidental expenses of the Agency, such as postage and stationary, is \$5000. Our receipts for the same period have been \$5670 27,—leaving a balance in favour of the general treasury of \$670 27.”

In the same communication they speak repeatedly of “our funds,” “our Missionaries,” “our congregations,” “our Missionary stations, &c.” In the Report for 1829, pages 68 and 69, the same agency say, “This year 69 Missionaries, including the agent, have been ‘*employed*’ within this agency, &c.” “The aggregate expenditure of the year, in *support* of these labourers, &c.” “The blessing of God has attended

the labours of *our Missionaries*. The congregations have increased and strengthened, at the stations to which they have been *appointed*, &c." In the Report for 1830, p. 58, they say, "The Missionaries '*employed*' the year now past, under the care of this Board, &c.;" and in other parts of the same Report, they use language and make statements similar to those above quoted. This is also true of the Auxiliary Societies of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Virginia. But this is not all—for it is not a *little remarkable*, that Mr. Peters himself actually furnished us, in his *last Annual Report*, with the *very words* we have used. Thus, page 44, Mr. Peters says in reference to the Western Agency, "The number of Missionaries '*employed*' on that field, is 67, and the agency assure us of the hearty co-operation of the churches, in *sustaining* their efforts."

"The Maine Missionary Society '*has sustained*' 38 Missionaries within its bounds." Of the Vermont Society, he says "*Its* number of Missionaries is 27"—and of the New H. Society, that it "*has aided* in the support of 28 Missionaries." But even this is not all—for although Mr. P. affirms of one of our assertions, that it is "*altogether a misrepresentation of the manner of the co-operation between the A. H. M. Society and its auxiliaries*," we do nevertheless soberly appeal to that very plan of co-operation, for another *illustration* of the *truth* of that assertion, and we will here quote from the last Annual Report of the Society.

1. The 8th Article of its own Constitution, page 8th, which reads thus:—"Every Auxiliary Society, which *shall agree* to pay the *whole* of its funds to this Society, shall be entitled to a Missionary, or Missionaries, to labour in such fields *as it may designate*, at least to the amount of its contributions; provided such designation be made at the time of payment."

2. The 5th Article of the "form of Constitution recommended to the adoption of Auxiliary Societies," page 63, which reads thus:—"The annual receipts of the Society, after defraying incidental expenses, shall be paid over to the treasurer of the Parent Society, *with directions* as to the section of country in which it shall be expended in Missionary labours, should the Board deem it important to give such directions."

3. The 1st and 2d resolutions recommended to the adoption of Auxiliary Societies, page 64, which read thus:—

"This Society shall pay over, &c."

4. The "reasons of the foregoing recommendations," pages 64 and 5, some of which are as follows:—

"By these stipulations, each auxiliary society is left to the *independent and unembarrassed* exercise of all its *rights*, in the business of *appropriating its own funds* to the relief of the needy within its limits, &c."

"These stipulations, wherever they shall be adopted, will *put it out of the power* of the National Society to contravene the wishes of those whose business it is to manage the affairs, and guard the purity of the churches, in the different sections of our country." "*It can plant no Missionary* in stations yielded to the supervision of an Auxiliary Society, Presbytery or Synod, *without the approbation of the same*, &c."

"The missionaries of the auxiliaries being also the missionaries of the Parent Society, will be reported as such in our annual alphabetical list, with *appropriate marks*, to denote by *what auxiliary society* they have been supported."

We have now furnished a *part* of the "*misapprehended data*," demanded by Mr. Peters in his fifth letter, on the ground of which "Mr. Russell does not hesitate to declare officially, *that* 196 (not 91) of the missionaries [*reported by*"] the American Home Missionary Society, were *employed and sustained, not by the Parent Society, but by auxiliary societies, &c.*" If the language of auxiliaries and agencies in their annual reports, if the declarations of Mr. Peters himself, and if the articles quoted from the Constitution of the Parent Society and of its Auxiliaries, and the resolutions and stipulations proposed (*and "adopted,"* as Mr. P. says, page 64, "by the New Hampshire Missionary Society, the Vermont Domestic Missionary Society, the Hampshire Missionary Society, Mass., and substantially by a *number of other societies*, as the *basis* of their auxiliary connexion with the A. H. M. Society")—if, we say, all these things have *any meaning*, then to us, at least, it is perfectly obvious, that the auxiliaries and agencies of the A. H. M. Society, generally, do not only "*employ and sustain*," but also "*appoint*," "*control*," and "*pay*" their own missionaries—that they are auxiliary in *name and form*, but "*independent and unembarrassed*" in *fact*. If it be true that the National Society, "*can plant no missionary in stations yielded to the supervision of an auxiliary society, without the consent of the same*," and that the "*appropriate marks*" denote "*by what auxiliaries*" the missionaries "*have been supported*"—then, *why*, we ask, does Mr. P. complain of the statements of the Board, and pronounce them "*erroneous*," "*depreciating*," "*inappropriate*," and "*not sustained by facts?*" Surely he cannot reasonably blame us for believing *he* is "*honest*" and true in his own assertions, especially in documents which he has carefully prepared for the eye of the public! And what have the Board done more than receive and follow his own principles and directions in forming their offensive estimates.

In his fifth letter, Mr. Peters says, "*All the missionaries named in the last report of the Society were appointed by the Ex. Committee at New York, and paid from the Treasury of the Parent Society, excepting those who were sustained by funds derived from three auxiliaries in New England.*" But does the *Report* say this? Far, very far from it—the "*appropriate marks*" "*designate the auxiliary societies by whose funds the congregations and missionary stations, against which they are placed, have been aided*," p. 11—they "*denote by what auxiliary society they [the missionaries] have been supported.*"—p. 65.

The "*Western Agency*" also say, in their last report to the Society, p. 58-9, "*The missionaries employed the year now past, under the care of this Board, [67 in number] have been located within the several counties, as follows, having charge of one, two, and in some cases three congregations each, and deriving aid from our funds to the average amount of from \$75 to \$100.*" We would by no means attempt to impeach Mr. P.'s veracity in this matter, nor would we be understood to insinuate, that he has made any "*erroneous assertion*," but we bring these apparently opposite statements together, in order to show that there are some difficult points in the public documents of other societies, as well as our own, which require explanation, and which *ought not* to be hastily condemned as "*erroneous*," and "*not sustained by facts.*" Sufficient, we trust, has now been said, to justify the Board in the comparison they presumed to institute between the operations of the A. H. M. Society, *as such*, and those of the Assembly's Board. To

the *results* of that comparison, they were unavoidably conducted by the "data" already given, and derived from the annual reports—and notwithstanding all the declarations, reasonings, and accusations of Mr. Peters, they are still constrained to believe, that they did not err in their judgment in the particulars we have already considered.

There is one of the "erroneous assertions" quoted by Mr. Peters, upon which, so far as we have noticed, he has omitted to bestow a single remark. We refer to that which affirms, that most of the auxiliaries named, "*were in successful operation, long before the A. H. M. Society was formed.*" As its truth is directly called in question, we feel ourselves bound to exhibit some of the "data" on which this opinion was formed.

The whole number of the auxiliaries alluded to in our letter is *eight*. In reference to four of them, the Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Hampshire Societies, there will be no question, we presume, either of their existence, or of the success of their operations, before the formation of the A. H. M. Society. In regard to the Western and Central Agencies, the fact is not equally clear and unquestionable. The obscurity in reference to these, is owing to the circumstance, that their *names* and *relations* have been somewhat changed. The change effected in the former is thus related in the 2d Report of the Society, 1828, page 65,—“The Board, formerly denominated the GENEVA AGENCY, was reappointed by the Ex. Committee, Aug. 23, 1827, under the title of the Western Agency of the A. H. M. Society, for the state of New York.” In 1826 the *Geneva Agency* made a report to the United Domestic Missionary Society of New York, in which allusion is made to a similar report, made in 1825, a year before the formation of the A. H. M. Society; and it was then in successful operation, and how many years preceding it had been so, we have not at present the means of stating with precision, nor is this necessary, for the facts already stated are sufficient for our purpose.

The organization of the "CENTRAL AGENCY," is briefly alluded to in the last Report of the A. H. M. Society, page 60. "In our former Reports, the "*Western Domestic Missionary Society*," of the state of New York, which had the seat of its operations in the counties lying in, or contiguous to, the Synod of Utica, has been mentioned as sustaining a considerable number of missionaries. That Society *having been dissolved*, and several Presbyteries and individual churches and ministers having expressed a desire that the Domestic Missionary efforts of that region might be *more intimately* connected with the A. H. M. Society, the Ex. Committee in October last, appointed a Board of Inquiry and Reference, similar to the "Western Agency," and denominated the "*Central Agency of the A. H. M. Society, for the State of New York.*"

As we have already shown that "*most*" of the auxiliaries named (five out of eight,) were in successful operation before the A. H. M. Society was formed, we need not stop to inquire *when*, or by *what means*, the "W. D. M. Society" was formed; but we wish to show, that it was in "*successful operation*" before it was converted into an "*agency*." This may be clearly demonstrated by a brief comparison of the Report of the "W. D. M. Society," in 1829, with that of the "*Central Agency*," in 1830. From these reports it appears that the number of missionaries employed in 1829, when the Society was *nominally auxiliary*, but *virtually independent*, was 64; the number of congre-

gations supplied "*upwards of one hundred*, the amount of expenditures and appropriations, \$6324 80; and the receipts and subscriptions, \$6506 28." In 1830, when the Society had been changed into an agency, and was "*more intimately connected with the A. H. M. Society,*" it had "received applications for *twenty-eight* different congregations, recommended to the Parent Society appropriations amounting to \$2116 66, and \$1479 25 *subscribed* for the objects of the Agency."

We think it must now be manifest to every candid mind, that the declarations made in our letter respecting the Auxiliaries of the A. H. M. Society, were founded in truth; and the *evidence* already adduced on this point, we trust will be satisfactory. We stated distinctly in our letter, and we again affirm, that we did not *intentionally* institute any "*depreciating comparisons;*" but as we stand charged before the public with having done so, we will now endeavour to show that *no such comparisons* have ever been made *in fact*. [See Appendix, No. II.]

9. THE STRICTURES ON OUR LAST ANNUAL REPORT.

Under the head of "NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS!" Mr. Peters in his fifth letter quotes from our last Report, page 24, the following passage: "The whole number of appointments and reappointments for the year is 246," and then significantly inquires, "What does this mean? Is it not that 246 appointments, &c. were *actually made* by the Board, within the year ending May, 1830." "*For the year*, that is, from May, 1829, to May, 1830." We answer,—it means what it says. "*For the year,*" that is, *as we clearly apprehend*, the whole number of appointments and reappointments [*embraced in the Report*] for the year is 246; and *not*, as Mr. Peters is resolved to have it, "that 246 appointments, &c. were *actually made*, by the Board, within the year ending May, 1830." The meaning is so perfectly obvious, that we were "*truly amazed*" that it was so grossly misinterpreted. Had the Board really *intended* to convey the idea suggested by Mr. P. they would undoubtedly have expressed it clearly, definitely, and perhaps *tautologically*, as he has done. But they manifestly had no such intention. It would have been *palpably erroneous* and *directly contradictory* of *facts*, repeated more than *thirty times* in the preceding details. Let the Report be its *own interpreter*, and no man need mistake its import. The *details* of the appointments and reappointments show distinctly, not only "*the year,*" but the very month and day when each was "*actually made,*" and also the precise length of time embraced in each commission; and in these *thirty-nine* (not *forty-one* as Mr. P. states,) instances, the *fact* is therein recorded, that this number of the appointments was "*actually made*" before the month of May, 1829. How then could any man, not under the blinding influence of "*very strong doubts,*" both of the *sanity* and *veracity* of the Board, have even *suspected* that they intended, directly afterwards, in the very same public and official document, to *contradict explicitly* those *thirty-nine* formal details! Had Mr. Peters permitted the Report to speak for itself, his inquiry, "what does this mean?" would have been distinctly answered *thirty-nine* times!

If this *forced construction* be inadmissible, then the report is *perfectly consistent* with itself, and we shall hereafter make it appear, that it is *perfectly consistent* also with *facts*, and that every important statement contained in it is *strictly true*.

Mr. Peters represents it as a very *extraordinary circumstance* that

forty-one, as he says, but thirty-nine, as the Report states, of the appointments named in the Report for the year were the "*very same which were reported the year previous*," and after referring to the cases of Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Bumstead as "specimens," he inquires, "is it not plain that *thus to swell* the list of appointments '*for the year*,' by counting forty-one former appointments, is calculated to produce an impression on the public mind, *far surpassing the truth*, as to the efficiency of the Board?" We answer, positively, *no!* For if the *thirty-nine had not been counted*, we should have come *just so far short* of exhibiting the "*truth*." The precise and palpable object of the Board, in all these calculations of appointments, reappointments, and appropriations, was to present in bold relief the *ECONOMY of their plan of appropriations*. To effect this object they might, with the utmost propriety, have made *all* the appointments and reappointments, and appropriations, embraced in the reports for the *two* years, the basis of their calculations, but this they did not think proper to do, because a similar calculation had already been made in the Report for 1829, and its accuracy had never been called in question, because *nearly the whole amount of services* to be performed under these thirty-nine appointments which were "*actually made*," but *not fulfilled*, before May, 1829, came properly within the Report for 1830; and because they wished to show by a direct *contrast*, that they had actually, in *one year*, reduced the average amount of appropriation to each missionary from \$300 to \$130. These the Board think were *sufficient reasons* for preferring the method of calculation adopted, to that which Mr. Peters has been pleased to suggest to them. Had it been the object of the Board, in this calculation, to exhibit the average expense of each year's labour *actually performed*, then, undoubtedly, a very different kind of "*basis*" must have been adopted. But this *was not their object*. The necessity of such a calculation was superseded by the *minute statements* which were designed immediately to follow it; showing that *more than three-fourths* of the missionaries employed were to receive from the Board, \$100 (or less) each, for a year's labour; and that *not a single missionary* of the Board, employed in the United States, was to receive more than \$200, or *half* the usual missionary wages.

It being, then, the exclusive and palpable *object* of this calculation to exhibit distinctly the *economy* of the Board in its *appropriations*, it was not only proper, but indispensably *necessary*, that *all* the *appointments and reappointments* made and accepted, and *all* the *appropriations* embraced in the Report, should be accurately enumerated—and in this enumeration Mr. Peters himself admits, and has taken pains to *prove* and *illustrate* the fact, that *the Board made no mistake!* We sincerely thank him for the frank avowal of this fact, because it will supersede the necessity of any trouble on our part to demonstrate it. Mr. Peters, then, has ascertained, to his own entire satisfaction, that there were (including those of the Secretary and his Assistant) 246 appointments "*actually made*" by the Board, and "*accepted*," too, we affirm, for ought that he or we knew to the contrary, at the time the report was made. He has ascertained, that the amount of time is really "*in round numbers 182 years*"—and therefore the Board in this respect have *made no mistake*, and are spared the trouble of another tedious calculation. He has, also, ascertained, he says, that forty-one of these appointments were actually made previous to May, 1829—that "*three appointments*

are reported in connexion with a *single name!*—"that *six* individuals received eighteen appointments and reappointments—that there are thirty-four individuals named in the report as having received *two* appointments each, making sixty-eight appointments to the thirty-four missionaries!"

But *how*, and *where*, did Mr. Peters ascertain all these acknowledged facts? Let him answer for himself. "I have *counted* with care all the appointments *named in this Report*"—"I have carefully *estimated* the time embraced in the 244 appointments *named in this Report!!* It was, then, by a *careful analysis* of our own Report—by counting the appointments and reappointments, and by estimating the time *named* in the *Report*, that he arrived at the very same results as the Board have briefly stated in words which they hardly deemed it possible for any one to misunderstand—and concerning the import of which, if a doubt should arise, no man can be at a loss, after hastily glancing at the plain and accurate *details* by which they are preceded in the Report. *Why*, then, does Mr. Peters complain, and bring forward against the Board, such charges as, if supported, *ought* not only to deprive them of their arduous office, but also subject them to the severest censures of the Christian church? Simply because he has *illegitimately inferred*, from a single expression in their Report, that they *intended* to say, or *ought to have said*—precisely what they *never did say*—and which they *could not* have said, without deliberately uttering a palpable and useless falsehood, and that, too, directly in the face of thirty-nine previous declarations to the contrary! With such unparalleled folly and iniquity, the Board stand virtually charged before the public, by the Corresponding Secretary of a sister institution—for he affirms, in one place, that their statements in this matter were made "*deliberately and with accuracy*," and in another, that they are "*calculated* to produce an impression on the public mind *far surpassing the truth!*" From this decision of Mr. P., the Board now confidently appeal to that of the Christian public.

It is a fact somewhat remarkable, that while Mr. Peters has alleged it as a very serious charge against the Board, that they have counted in their Report "for the year 1830," 41 appointments which were named in the Report for 1829—the very same fact occurs in his own report for 1830 no less than *thirty-six* [not 39!] *times*. By referring to the details of that report, it will be found, *if we have "counted accurately,"* that 36 of the missionaries reported as in commission *for twelve months each*, "*are the very same which were reported the year previous!*" The whole amount of labour *actually performed* by these 36 missionaries in commission for one year each, is precisely twelve years and nine months—say, in round numbers, 13 years. If we find it difficult to inform the public, agreeably to Mr. P.'s request, "*how it is*" that 198 missionaries have received, in a single year, 246 "appointments and reappointments for the year," we find none at all in showing from the details of his own report, "*how it is*" that 36 missionaries are named in that report "for the year," as in commission for twelve months each, while the whole amount of service, actually performed by them, was less than *thirteen years*. We can also show, that at this rate it would require 758 missionaries, in commission for one year each, to perform the 274 years' labour which was actually done by 392. According to this estimate, then, it is plain that 392 missionaries *might* have "received," in a single year, 758 "appointments and reappointments" for *one year each*, in order that 274 years of labour might be

actually performed. It is a little remarkable, also, that there is *nothing in the details* of this report connected at all with these estimates, different from the details of our own report, except the addition of a column in which the months of labour actually performed by each missionary are stated. This we omitted to state in our details, (and Mr. Peters did the same in 1829)—nor was this necessary to a right understanding of our report. The *amount* of the labour *actually performed* by the whole number of our missionaries, was distinctly stated, in the body of our Report, and in immediate connexion with these estimates, to have been “*equal to the continued labour of a single individual for more than eighty years.*” On this point, therefore, the public were in danger of no mistake. In the details, the precise date of each commission was given, and the precise length of time embraced in each; and it was perfectly easy for any one to ascertain in a moment the exact *proportion* of time embraced in any given commission, which came properly within the particular year for which each report was made—thus in the extreme case (quoted by Mr. Peters) of Mr. Bumstead; the report for 1829 states that Mr. B. was appointed, Sept. 24, 1828, for one year. From this date, until May, 1829, there were seven months and six days—leaving four months and twenty-four days, of the time named in the commission, to be fulfilled after that date. It was of course necessary to name the same appointment in the Report for 1830, because four months and twenty-four days of the service actually performed belonged exclusively to the estimate for that year. In the same way, all similar cases in our Report may be explained, if any explanation be necessary. We have presented Mr. Bumstead’s as an *extreme case*, because the appointment of Mr. B., and those of the Rev. Joshua Moore and James Smith, were the only appointments actually made in 1828—(whereas *thirty-six* of the appointments reported by Mr. Peters in 1830, were actually made in 1828, and had been previously named in the Report for 1829)—the remaining *thirty-six* appointments were actually made in 1829, and most of them but a short time before our Report was prepared; and in our next Report it will appear that not more than six or seven years of the *labour actually performed* under those commissions really belonged to the amount actually performed in the preceding year. But it was not necessary to deduct these six or seven years from the 182 embraced in our estimate, because it was *not* the *design* of that estimate to ascertain the amount of labour *actually performed*, and the *average expense* of each year of *actual service*, but the whole amount of time specified in *all the appointments and reappointments*, and the average expense of each year’s labour, according to this economical plan of *appropriations*. In the very next line of the Report after this estimate, it is distinctly stated:—“Some of *these* commissions have been *recently* issued, and have as yet been *fulfilled only in part.*” Some of *what commissions*? Certainly of those embraced in the estimate, and distinctly recorded in the preceding details. It is difficult for the Board to conceive how this matter could have been more plainly expressed, than it has been in the Report; and it is equally difficult for them to imagine how any man could have mistaken their meaning, as the Secretary of the A. H. M. Society has done.

The Board have not brought the Report of their sister institution into comparison with their own, for the purpose of charging upon their brethren, either “misrepresentations” or *dishonesty*, but to show, that in their apprehension, it is open to the very same objections as

their own. They do firmly believe, however, that both Reports fully explain themselves, and are essentially correct, in the particulars above named.

But, as the Secretary of the A. H. M. Society has felt himself not only justified, but *constrained by a sense of duty*, to subject their official doings, after they have been examined, and approved by the General Assembly, to very severe, extensive, and unmerited censure, the Board deem it proper in their appendix, to notice a few statements, calculated to illustrate the fact, that to "err is human," and that the best of men are liable to make mistakes. [See Appendix, No. III.]

Our own report has been "carefully analyzed" since Mr. Peters' letters appeared, and we are happy to assure the public, that the result has been a full conviction of its *strict accuracy* and *truth in every particular* alluded to by Mr. Peters, with the exception of *one typographical error*, of which we shall presently speak. If Mr. P. has made no mistake in his own Report, for 1829, we are *certain* he has made several in his "careful examination" of ours. On this point we speak with confidence, because we think it is no vanity in us to affirm, that we feel ourselves better qualified to judge in this matter, than even Mr. Peters himself. We have noticed some of his mistakes in this matter already, and we have others still to mention. In the last part of his fifth letter he arrives at the positive conclusion, that the whole number of appointments "*for one year each*," is only 136. The Board have never asserted that the whole number of "*appointments*" was 136; for this would have been erroneous, the number being much less; but their Report does *affirm* that "the whole number of appointments and *re-appointments* for the year, is 246. Of these, 159 were for one year each, and 87 for a shorter term." This is the language of the Report, and the exact truth of this statement the Board do now, after a careful re-examination, *positively confirm*, although they deem it unnecessary to furnish the public with "the data, by which to account for *such a mistake!*"

We deem it also unnecessary to make any extended remarks respecting the "*specimens*," (which Mr. P. has exhibited with notes of exclamation [!] and interrogation [?]) of the appointments and re-appointments, and appointments for two years of the same individuals! for we have *yet to learn*, wherein either the impropriety or error of *recording such facts*, consists. The facts *existed*, and in giving our details, we deemed it our duty to *record* them. They are open to the inspection of the public, and need no explanation.

10. EXPLANATION OF THE "TABLE."

On the sixth letter of Mr. Peters, which is much the longest, and the most severe, and, also, the most positive, we shall make but few remarks, because some of the insinuations contained in it, are accompanied by their own correctives. An instance of this kind occurs in reference to the "*Table exhibiting a brief view*," &c. There occurs in this table a real error, and this is frankly admitted. It is, however, *merely*, and *manifestly* a *typographical error!* and the truth of this declaration, Mr. P. himself *virtually demonstrates*. We shall state the facts in his own words,—“In the Report for 1829, (page 19) we are told that the ‘*appropriations*’ for that year were ‘*about \$15,000*,’ and that the ministerial labour pledged under those appropriations, when performed would amount to ‘*more than 50 years*,’ and by dividing

\$15,000 by 50 years, the result was found to be \$300. This the Secretary understood and reported as the average expense of each year's ministerial labour. But in the table before us, the number of years embraced in the commissions named in the previous Report, is definitely stated at 60 years, which is ten years more than the number estimated in the previous Report, while \$300, which was the result of \$15,000 divided by 50 years, remains the same!" Had the difficulty respecting the 60 years been presented to us, we should have said at once, it is manifestly a typographical error, and ought to be 50; and had this been doubted, and proof required, we should have referred, as Mr. P. has done, first to the table itself, where the results of a deliberate calculation show, that the number required was 50; and secondly, to the Report of the former year, where the number is distinctly stated to be *about* 50. And to make the demonstration complete, we should have added, that the number *fifty* is distinctly printed *three* times in ten lines, and twice italicised. And who would then have hesitated to believe, that the error was *merely typographical*? "*How then shall we account*" for the following *sarcasm* of Mr. P. immediately following his own demonstration? "*How to account for this clashing of statements, and this borrowing of ten, in division, without altering the result, I confess myself at a loss!*"

The entire correctness of the table, with this single exception, is perfectly obvious to the Board, however swollen and contradictory it may appear to Mr. Peters. The principles on which it was manifestly constructed have been so clearly developed in our preceding remarks, that we think it unnecessary to do more than repeat the declaration, that it formed no part of the design of the Board, either expressed or implied, in the estimates made, or in the table based upon them, to exhibit the *amount of labour actually performed* and the *average expense of such labour*; but it was their design, both *implied* and *expressed*, to exhibit distinctly their plan of *appropriations*, as an illustration of their strict *economy*. The table simply presents to view the *results* of the estimates made in the annual Reports; and in those Reports, the process by which these results were obtained, is accurately stated. Mr. Peters himself admits the *correctness* of the results, but complains of the process by which they were obtained; and with how much candour and kindness, we leave it for an enlightened Christian public to decide.

11. THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

The last particular embraced in Mr. Peters' "*disclosure*," we present in his own words, and with his own emphasis, as follows:—

"Again, it appears from the Treasurer's account, appended to the Report for May, 1830, that the receipts of the Board during that year, (exclusive of \$1500, '*borrowed on the Treasurer's note*,' and \$702 '*due the Treasurer*,' to balance his accounts,) were \$9668.

"The Secretary in the table before us states the receipts to have been \$12,632! The public ought to be told how it is that these two official statements can thus differ \$2964, and yet both be right!

"I have only to add, on this topic, that, if the Secretary is in the habit of indulging in such statements as the foregoing, in his official Reports and other publications, it is surely time for the 170 members of the Board of Missions, to give their attention to this matter, and by interposing their authority, to put a stop to representations, so manifestly tending to mislead the public mind."

In reference to the insinuations contained in the preceding sentences, and in many other parts of Mr. Peters's letters, and aimed directly at their Corresponding Secretary, the Board have only to say, that they are happy to be *identified* with him in all the official documents which he has heretofore presented to the public, and in that which he has now prepared, in compliance with our instructions. They take pleasure, also, in assuring the public, that their Secretary is in the habit "of indulging in such statements" as contain and exhibit truth, as we think we have fully demonstrated in the preceding vindication of his conduct and ours, from all the charges which have been published to the world, by Mr. Peters. If further proof be needed, of the utterly groundless suspicions indulged and expressed by Mr. P. respecting the veracity of the Board and their Secretary, it is furnished in the facts connected with this last subject of his animadversions. The public then shall "*be told how it is that these two official statements can thus differ \$2964, and yet both be right!*" The Treasurer, SOLOMON ALLEN, Esq. was "*right*," because he reported precisely the amount which he had actually received. The Secretary, also, was right, because he stated in the body of his Report, as he was in duty bound to do, the whole amount of the monies which had actually been received during the year, *not only by Mr. Allen*, but also by ISAAC SNOWDEN, Esq. who acted as the Treasurer of the Board, for a part of the year, before Mr. Allen accepted his appointment and entered upon the discharge of his duties. The problem of Mr. Peters then is solved: his demands are answered: his charges are refuted: and the Secretary and Treasurer of the Board are placed before the public unimpeached!

In the Appendix to this Reply, No. IV., there will be found a statement of facts, in reference to the "*radical difference*" between the plans and operations of the Board, and those of the A. H. M. Society, which we deem highly important and indispensably necessary, to a complete vindication of the *principles* upon which our missionary operations have hitherto been conducted. After an attentive perusal of this communication, and a careful examination of that part of our Appendix, in connexion with the *second* number of the same, we are entirely confident, that those principles will be highly approved by the Christian public, and that the conviction on every candid mind will be deep and irresistible; that the charges alleged against the Board by Mr. Peters, were entirely gratuitous, and manifestly unjust. We cannot find language to express the regret and astonishment excited in our own minds, both by the unwarrantable *manner*, and the extraordinary *matter*, of these unfounded charges. We were utterly unconscious of having betrayed the trust reposed in us by the General Assembly, or of having given any just occasion of offence to any kindred institution in our land. Shortly after the reorganization of the Board, in 1828, we addressed to the A. B. C. F. Missions at Boston, and to the A. H. M. Society at New York, respectful and affectionate communications, distinctly avowing our plans and principles of action, and proffering on our part, what we earnestly solicited from them, a friendly correspondence and co-operation in the great and hallowed work of forwarding the missionary enterprise. We distinctly recognised, and cordially saluted both, as independent, but sister institutions, and manifested our disposition to reciprocate cheerfully all the offices of Christian courtesy and kindness. In our letter to the Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery, we said, and now repeat it,—“the Board

simply *claim* what they *cheerfully yield* to others, the *privilege* of moving forward kindly, peaceably and independently, to the occupancy and improvement of such portions of the wide spread desolations, as may be fully opened to their view, and need their assistance." Under such circumstances we could hardly have believed it possible, had we not been furnished with an ocular demonstration of the fact, that we should ever be assailed by the Corresponding Secretary of the A. H. M. Society, not with calm, dispassionate and conclusive arguments, but with the unholy weapons of wit, irony and sarcasm. Such a course, however, has been deliberately adopted by the Secretary; and if confirmation of the painful fact be required by any, let them procure and read for themselves, and candidly interpret the letters of Mr. P. as originally published in the "Cincinnati Journal," and republished, recently, in the "New York Evangelist." To all the allegations brought against us, we have endeavoured to reply in that spirit of meekness and forbearance, which the gospel demands; and we now willingly commit the whole matter to the church of the living God, and its glorious Head, in the full assurance of hope, that the great and benevolent enterprise in which we are engaged, will be vigorously sustained by the counsels, the prayers, and the offerings of all who earnestly desire the prosperity of Zion, and the universal reign of the Prince of Peace.

In the name, and by order of the Board of Missions
of the Presbyterian Church.

JOSHUA T. RUSSELL,
Corresponding Secretary.

Office of the Board, Philadelphia, March 2, 1831.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Office of the Board of Missions, No. 25, Sansom street.
Philadelphia, September 15, 1830.

To the Rev. Messrs. J. L. Wilson, D. D., S. Thomson, D. Root, and J. Gallagher, Committee of Correspondence of the Presbytery of Cincinnati.

GENTLEMEN,

Your important communication of the 26th of July, was received at this office on the 6th of August, and laid before the Board of Missions on the 10th of the same month. On account of the absence of many members of the Board from the city, it was deemed best to defer the particular consideration of your communication until after their return, in order that a full meeting might be secured. Of this decision you were duly informed. On the 7th of the present month a special meeting of the Board was held, and your letter was again read; and after some deliberation, a decision on the matter submitted was postponed until the 14th inst. At three o'clock yesterday afternoon, the Board was again convened, and the following members were present, viz.—Dr. Green, Mr. McCalla, Mr. Pratt, of Georgia, Mr. Russell, Mr. Winchester, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Sanford, Mr. Engles, Dr. Skinner, Mr. Allen, Mr. McMullin, and Mr. Smith; and the result of their deliberations is expressed in the following minute and resolutions, which were adopted without a single dissenting voice.

"A communication from the Cincinnati Presbytery, signed by a committee of several clergymen, was read, suggesting the propriety of establishing a united agency in the West, through which the Board of Missions, and the A. H. M. Society, might unitedly conduct their missionary operations. After a full conversation on this subject, it was

"Resolved, That while this Board have the highest confidence in the integrity and purity of motives of the Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery, in the suggestions which they have submitted in respect to a united agency in the West for conducting missionary operations; and while they sincerely regret that any difficulties and collisions should have arisen in the prosecution of this great and important work, they are nevertheless constrained, by a sense of duty to many of the churches and Presbyteries in the West, which are already auxiliary to this Board, on the plan which has been approved by the General Assembly; as well as by their own earnest desire to pursue such a course as they deem best adapted to secure the permanent peace and tranquillity of the churches, to express their full conviction of the entire inexpediency of attempting to organize such a United Agency in the West.

"Resolved, That the Ex. Committee prepare and forward to the Committee of the Cincinnati Presbytery a respectful letter, presenting in detail the reasons which have conducted this Board to the conclusion above expressed."

In compliance with the resolution of the Board, and in behalf of the Ex. Committee, I now proceed, gentlemen, to lay before you some of the reasons which, in the opinion of the Board of Missions, render any further attempts to establish a United Agency in the West, entirely inexpedient.

1. The Board deem such attempts entirely inexpedient, because the Union contemplated would be *incongruous*. Between the Board of Missions and the A. H. M. Society, there is a radical difference in the principles of their organization, responsibilities, and plan of operations. The one is strictly *ecclesiastical*, the other as strictly *voluntary*. The one is directly responsible to the highest judicatory of the church for all its acts, and is, in all respects, under its immediate and constant supervision and control—the other is responsible only to a small number of private individuals, and those, too, widely scattered over the country, and actually at variance in their views of doctrine, discipline, and ecclesiastical polity. The one proposes to conduct all its distant operations chiefly by the agency of *Sessions* and *Presbyteries*—the other by voluntary associations and agencies wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories. Such being the true state of the case, it is perfectly obvious, that the Union proposed, if assented to, on the part of this Board, would imply an utter abandonment of that whole plan of operations which they have formed with great deliberation and care,

which has repeatedly been approved by the Assembly, and under their full sanction been earnestly recommended to the churches and Presbyteries in every part of our country. It may, indeed, be said, that the ultimate object of these two missionary Boards is essentially the same—to supply the destitute with an able and faithful ministry; and that therefore minor differences, as to the particular method of effecting this great object, should be disregarded. It is also true that evangelical Episcopalians, and sound Presbyterians, have the same ultimate object in view, in all their missionary operations—but still a union, between these distinct denominations, for the purpose of effecting this object, would be regarded by both as extremely unnatural and incongruous—and by the members of this Board, the proposed union between this ecclesiastical Society, and an irresponsible voluntary association, is regarded somewhat in the same light.

2. The Board deem further attempts to effect this union entirely inexpedient, because it would at once dissolve an auxiliary connexion which has recently been formed, at considerable labour and expense, and after very mature deliberation, between this Board, and a large number of congregations and Presbyteries in the West. In the valley of the Mississippi there are, at the present time, ten or fifteen Presbyteries, and about two hundred Sessions, which sustain to this Board a direct auxiliary relation; and in all these judicatories the plans of the Board have been fully approved, and cordially adopted, and are now in very successful operation; and it is morally certain that the dissolution of this relation would be highly injurious to the cause of domestic missions.

3. The Board deem further attempts at union entirely inexpedient, because they are fully convinced that the proposed Union would be utterly disapproved of, and rejected by a large number of the Presbyteries and a still larger number of the Sessions and congregations in the West. Not a doubt is entertained by a single member of the Board, that you express in your letter of the 26th of July, the honest and deliberate convictions of your own minds when you say, “this communication speaks the sentiments of a large majority of the brethren in the West, who have seriously deliberated on this matter.” In this opinion, however, the Board do not, by any means, agree with the Committee. For the last eighteen months, the Board have maintained an extensive correspondence with pastors, churches and presbyteries in the West, and by means of such correspondence, together with the reports of their missionaries and agents, they have acquired, as they conceive, a pretty accurate knowledge of the views and feelings of the people generally, in reference to this matter. In the course of this extended correspondence, they have received; not only from individual ministers and laymen of high standing and influence, but also, from several important Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods, the most satisfactory assurances of strong attachment, and decided preference. From the same official sources they have also learned, that many of the presbyteries, and a very large number of the ministers, and sessions in the West, are decidedly opposed to a united agency there for missionary purposes. Nor is the most decided opposition to all measures of the kind, suggested by the committee, confined to the West; it exists, also, in many Presbyteries and Synods of the middle and southern States, and their views on this subject have been clearly and repeatedly expressed to this Board.

4. The Board deem further attempts at union entirely inexpedient, because they do honestly and fully believe, that, if it could be effected, it would greatly *increase* the very evils it is designed to remove. The committee state, that there are serious collisions and contentions existing among ministers and churches in the West, in reference to missionary operations. Now, if such be the state of things at present, when every presbytery, pastor, and session, are at perfect liberty, both by the decisions of their respective synods, and of the General Assembly itself, to connect themselves with either Board, as shall be most agreeable to their own wishes, how much greater would such collisions and contentions be, if those who have already made their election, and formed their plan of operations, should suddenly be compelled to abandon their favourite plan, and to adopt another to which they are avowedly and decidedly averse! The Board cannot hesitate to believe, that the consequences would be disastrous in the extreme; and they do most earnestly deprecate the experiment proposed.

5. The Board deem this measure entirely inexpedient, because they are fully persuaded that, under existing circumstances, a far greater amount of good will be accomplished by the distinct and separate action of the two Boards, than could possibly be effected by a united agency. Their conclusions on this subject are based on existing facts, and for a clear development of these facts, they would respectfully refer the Committee to the last Annual Reports, of the Board of Missions, and the A. H. M. Society. From these it will be clearly ascertained, that while the H. M. Society has been steadily and rapidly advancing, for the last two years, in its career

of usefulness, extending its operations, augmenting its resources, and increasing its number of missionaries, the Board of Missions has in the mean time, been reorganized by the Assembly, and under the most appalling difficulties and discouragements, has been brought up to the missionary work, with a degree of energy and success, which has far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its friends, and already secured the confidence and patronage of many who were decidedly opposed to its reorganization. By carefully analyzing these Reports, it will be found, that the *Board of Missions have actually sent into the field*, during the last year, *a larger number of missionaries*, than the A. H. M. Society, *as such*, has done. Of the 392 missionaries reported by the latter Society, it will be found that 196 are employed and sustained, not by the Parent Society, but by auxiliary societies, the most of which were in successful operation, long before the A. H. M. Society was formed; whereas, the 198 reported by the Assembly's Board, (to which number more than 40 have been added, since the Report was made,) are all employed and sustained by the Board alone, without the agency of a single auxiliary of the kind just named. This comparison is not instituted either for the purpose of detracting from the merits of the A. H. M. Society, or boasting of the success which has crowned the humble efforts of the Board of Missions; but it is instituted simply for the purpose of presenting more distinctly to your view, interesting facts in reference to both these favoured institutions, for the existence of which, all who love the missionary cause, are bound to give thanks to the great Head of the Church, and in view of which, the members of this Board cannot entertain a doubt, that the separate and independent operations of these two Boards, have hitherto been blest of God, to the spiritual benefit of many thousands in our land, who would otherwise have remained destitute of the regular administration of the Word and ordinances of religion. By the exhibition of these facts to the last General Assembly, the same conviction was produced upon the minds of the members generally, as has been expressed by this Board in the foregoing resolution; and it was under this conviction of the inexpediency of the plan of union proposed to them by the Cincinnati Presbytery, that the proposition was dismissed by a large majority of that venerable body. The *good* actually accomplished, is apparent to all; but the difficulties and collisions complained of by the Committee, appear to be apprehended by comparatively few of the churches and presbyteries.

The Board of Missions have never yet experienced, nor do they now apprehend any serious evils, arising out of the separate action of the two general societies. On this subject, they have never yet uttered a single complaint, nor have they any to make. They do most sincerely bid their sister institution, God speed, in all judicious efforts to build up the waste places of Zion in every part of the land, and in all the prosperity and successes of that institution, they do most unfeignedly rejoice. There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed, and the Board simply claim what they cheerfully yield to others, the privilege of moving forward kindly, peaceably, and independently, to the occupancy and improvement of such portions of the wide spread desolations, as may be fully opened to their view, and need their assistance.

6. The Board deem further attempts to effect the proposed union, entirely inexpedient, because all past efforts to effect this object have not only failed, but they have also occasioned serious disquietude and dissatisfaction, not only in the minds of the friends of the Board generally, but also in the minds of many of the warm friends of the H. M. S., in this section of the country. It is now nearly two years, since the secretary of the H. M. S. presented in person to this Board, a plan of union between the two societies. He then urged at full length, the reasons which rendered a union desirable in his own view, and in that of the Committee in New York. The whole subject was then very maturely canvassed and candidly considered by this Board, and the result was a full conviction of the utter inexpediency of the proposed union. Since that time the subject of a general union, and also of a limited union in the Valley of the Mississippi, has been presented in various forms and aspects before this Board, and the decision of the Board, and of its friends generally throughout the country, has uniformly been the same. From the proceedings of the last Assembly in reference to this matter, it is perfectly manifest, that a large majority of its members entirely approved of this decision. The Board do very deeply regret, that the Presbytery of Cincinnati should have thought it necessary, after the doings of the Assembly, to agitate again this unpleasant subject, and they do now, gentlemen, earnestly and affectionately entreat you, and through you, the Presbytery, to consider prayerfully the *resolution* which they have adopted, and the *reasons* which they have assigned for it. They have no doubt, the Presbytery have been actuated by the purest motives in the measures they have adopted, and in the propositions they have directed you to make to this Board. Your communication has been received, and considered in the same spirit of kindness and candour with which it was submitted; and after having bestowed upon

it the most careful and prayerful deliberation, the Board find themselves under the painful necessity of expressing in the most decided manner, an opinion entirely different from that of their brethren of the Committee and Presbytery. While the Board feel themselves solemnly constrained to adopt this course, they do nevertheless cherish the most fraternal affection and regard for the Committee and the Presbytery whom they represent, and they wish them to be assured, that the Board will promptly adopt all proper and consistent measures in their power, to prevent collisions, and to promote peace and harmony throughout the churches. The Board do most sincerely believe, that if the churches in the West, are left to make their own election of the particular channel through which their charities shall flow forth to bless the perishing, and the Presbyteries to adopt and pursue such plans as they may severally deem most expedient to promote the cause of Missions, existing evils will soon be removed, and harmony and peace will pervade every section of the church, in reference to future Missionary operations.

By order of the Ex. Committee, and in the name and in behalf of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly, I am, gentlemen, very respectfully, yours, &c.

JOSHUA T. RUSSELL,
Corresponding Secretary.

No. II.

In the letter of the Board to the Committee, it will be perceived, that they have distinctly stated the specific object of the brief and candid comparison, which they deemed it proper to institute between their own doings, and those of the A. H. M. Society. They have solemnly disavowed the *intentions* imputed to them, and they are utterly unable to discover, in this letter, any just grounds of offence. A more minute and extended comparison (which would certainly have been strictly just and honourable) would have led to results far more favourable to the Board, than any which have been stated in their letter. Such a comparison it is now necessary to make, in order to vindicate the Board from the charges, on this point, alleged against them by Mr. Peters.

The following statements, which have all been derived from official documents, published to the world, will clearly show, that the "comparisons" heretofore instituted, were very far from having a tendency to "*depreciate* the doings of the A. H. M. Society, and to *magnify* those of the Board."

The A. H. M. Society, it is well known, was first organized in the year 1826. "The *United Domestic Missionary Society*" of New York, had then been in "successful operation" for four years, and reported at that time 127 missionaries, and 148 churches and congregations aided. From this local society, the national institution originated; and in order that the doings of the national society, "*as such*," may be fairly and fully compared with those of the Assembly's Board, "*as such*," since its reorganization in 1828, we must ascertain the precise *increase* of missionaries actually employed and sustained by each.

In 1830, the A. H. M. Society reported 392 missionaries. From this number, let the 127, reported by the "U. D. M. Society, out of which it was formed, be deducted, and the actual increase in the four years will be 265. But a large proportion of these were reported to the National Society as having been employed and sustained by auxiliary societies, which had been in successful operation before the A. H. M. Society was formed. In 1828, the "N. H. Missionary Society," the "Vermont D. M. Society," and the "Hampshire Missionary Society," and in 1829, the "Maine Missionary Society," were announced as auxiliaries to the A. H. M. Society, and the whole number of missionaries reported by these auxiliaries, at the time when they were formally recognised as such, was 98. In 1829, the "Western Domestic Missionary Society," which was then *formally* auxiliary, but *virtually* independent, and which has since become an Agency, reported 64 missionaries—total, 162—which, deducted from 265, leaves 103. From this calculation it will be seen, that if the several societies above named had remained *independent*, as they were before their connexion with the A. H. M. Society; and if they had continued their operations, *without any increase of their number of missionaries*, until 1830, they would then have had in their employment 289 missionaries—so that the *actual increase* of missionaries, secured by the operations of the A. H. M. Society, "*as such*," in *four years*, was precisely 103—whereas the actual increase of missionaries secured by the operations of the Board of Missions, "*as such*," in *two years* after its reorganization in 1828, was 167, the Board having commenced in 1828, after its reorganization with 31 missionaries, and having reported in 1830, 198. Such, it appears from the Reports of the several societies above named, are really the facts in this case; and even in this estimate, we are very far from "*depreciating*" the doings of the A. H. M. Society, as such, for we think it would not be *unreasonable* to

suppose, that the increase of missionaries would have been nearly as great, if the several societies had continued to *act separately*, as it has been, by their "*united action*."

No. III.

In the Report of the A. H. M. Society, for 1829, page 10, the Committee say—"In the third year, which is embraced in the present report, the number of congregations and missionary districts aided, has been 401, and the number of missionaries and agents employed 304"—and yet in the details of the same report it is distinctly stated, that five of these missionaries, the Rev. Messrs. Bradford, Espy, Orr, Osborn, and Stone, did not fulfil their appointments at all—one having declined—one having settled—two having engaged in the service of other societies, and one having removed. Two others (the Rev. S. W. May and H. Ford) are included in the 304, the former of whom had twenty-one, and the latter only seven days to serve in the year. Three others made no reports, and did not fulfil their appointments, as it appears from the subsequent Report. Let these ten be deducted, and the whole number will be reduced to 294. Had instances like these been embraced in the Report of the Board for 1830, the number of their missionaries might easily have been "*swollen*" to considerably more than 200—but they deemed this improper, and therefore, in all cases where they had information that missionaries declined their appointments, or had engaged in the service of other societies, they omitted to name them in the Report. The extraordinary example set by Mr. Peters, in his animadversions upon the letter of the Board, would justify a distinct chapter on "ERRONEOUS ASSERTIONS," embracing no less than ten formal "*corrections*" on this single item of his Report for 1829. "*A just regard to the honour and purity of our benevolent institutions*" does not, however, appear to us "*imprudently to demand*" such an "*exposure*!" We cannot persuade ourselves to believe, that Mr. Peters really intended to deceive the public, or improperly to "*magnify*" the doings of the A. H. M. Society; and although these, and a few statements, also, in reference to the amount of labour actually performed, may require explanation, yet we deem it entirely unnecessary and inexpedient to enter into a "*careful calculation*," to ascertain whether all the estimates contained in the Annual Reports of the A. H. M. Society, correspond precisely with our own views of the "*accuracy which ought to characterize the reports of a Missionary Board*." For ourselves, we have very great confidence in the strict integrity and veracity of the managers of our benevolent institutions generally—and while we are fully sensible, that all our brethren are liable to mistakes, we do firmly believe that none of them are capable of an intentional fraud upon the public.

No. IV.

The following statements are designed to *confirm and illustrate* the assertions made by the Board of Missions, and *denied* by Mr. Peters, respecting the radical difference between the A. H. M. Society and the Board of Missions. The most prominent points of difference are exhibited in the following particulars:—

1. The Origin, Title, and Jurisdiction of the two Institutions.

The Board of Missions was first established by the General Assembly in 1816, precisely *ten years* before the A. H. M. Society was formed. It was reorganized on its present plan, by the same ecclesiastical body, in 1828, just *two years* after that society was instituted. The Board then owes its existence to the whole Presbyterian church in the United States, as represented in the Assemblies of 1816 and 1828. It, therefore, justly claims to be, "*the Board of Missions acting under the care of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*." To this body it is directly responsible, and it is under its "*constant*" control, just as truly as "*the National Society*," as Mr. P. says in the Appendix to his Report for 1830, p. 65, is "*CONSTANTLY in session*!" The Board, then, has a *distinctive* character. It is really and exclusively a *Presbyterian* institution. Its operations are consequently limited to *Presbyterian* churches, and over no other churches does its jurisdiction extend. The A. H. M. Society claims to be a "*national institution*." Its members and officers appertain to three distinct denominations of Christians, viz.—Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Dutch Reformed, voluntarily associated together, for missionary purposes. According to the sixth article of the Constitution, the Society may be composed of as many different denominations as there are to be found in the United States—for it says expressly, "*any person* may become a member of this Society by contributing annually to its funds." Its officers and directors are to be annually appointed by the Society, which may thus be formed; and these officers and directors are to appoint an Ex. Committee; and among the powers of this Ex. Committee, the following are enume-

rated in the fourth article of the Constitution—they “shall appoint missionaries, and instruct them as to the field and manner of their labours; shall have the disposal of the funds; shall create such agency or agencies for appointing missionaries, and for other purposes, as the interests of the institution may require.” Now, if these be not prominent features of a society strictly and exclusively voluntary, and entirely independent of all ecclesiastical control, then it is impossible for such an institution to have an existence. From this *voluntary* society, which is also *national*, all *agencies* directly emanate, and these agencies are empowered by the Constitution to “*appoint missionaries*,” &c. Two such agencies have been established in the central and western parts of the State of New York, and one in Cincinnati, Ohio, for the whole valley of the Mississippi, embracing one-third of the population of the Union. By these *voluntary agencies*, “which are wholly disconnected with ecclesiastical judicatories,” the Society does “*propose (in its very Constitution) to conduct its distant operations.*” The Constitution of the A. H. M. Society no where *recognises* the existence of any “ecclesiastical judicatories,” to whom it acknowledges the slightest *responsibility*, or “over whose heads” it may not *constitutionally* pass, to collect funds, to establish agencies, and to locate missionaries.

In the Appendix to the Fourth Annual Report of the A. H. M. Society, there are certain “terms and stipulations recommended by the Ex. Committee,” by which any local societies, whether voluntary or ecclesiastical, may, on condition of becoming *auxiliary*, enjoy certain *privileges* which are withheld from those who are not auxiliary—but does this imply *responsibility to ecclesiastical judicatories*? Mr. P. affirms, that the Society is “*responsible to its own members.*” “What does this mean?” The *members of a society constitute the society*. It is therefore responsible only to itself.

2. Appropriations, Pledges, and Outfits.

A very few facts will serve to show, that there is a manifest and very wide difference in these particulars, if in no others, between the plans of the Board and the Society. In this connexion, the *practical utility* of the offensive “*table*” and “*estimates*” of the Board will be evident. In the last Annual Report of the Board, it was stated, both in the body of the Report and in the tabular view, that the whole amount of “*appropriations*” for 182 years’ service, was \$23,782.34. Let this estimate be compared with the “*pledges*” given to forty-two missionaries by the A. H. M. Society, and it will be found, that \$16,800 (exclusive of *outfits*) were pledged for forty-two years of ministerial service. In the Report for 1830, p. 40, the committee say, “in reference to these forty-two missionaries, that they have found it “*necessary to assume their entire support, including such sums as they derive from the fields on which they labour.*” And from the *tables* connected with the *details* of that Report, it appears that these forty-two missionaries were appointed for one year each, and that the “months of aid pledged” were twelve to each missionary. Of these forty-two missionaries, eighteen were located in the State of Ohio. The amount of aid “pledged” to the *eighteen*, was \$7200. The Board of Missions reported last year thirty-six missionaries in Ohio, and twenty-six of these were appointed for one year each, and the whole amount appropriated to the *twenty-six*, was only \$2585. On this plan of appropriations, then, the amount pledged by the A. H. M. Society for *eighteen years’* labour in Ohio, exceeded the amount which would have been pledged by the Assembly’s Board, for *seventy-two years’* labour in the same State. This, too, is exclusive of “*outfits.*” In the last Report of the Society we are furnished with no “*data*” by which the amount of *outfits* can be accurately ascertained—but from the Report for 1829, it appears that *seven* of the missionaries who were appointed to Ohio that year, (whose “*entire support, including such sums as they derive from the fields on which they labour,*” was pledged) received “*outfits*” to the amount of \$295; and that *seven others*, appointed to different States, received similar “*pledges*” and “*outfits*” to the amount of \$585. Total amount of outfits, to *fourteen* missionaries, *eight hundred and eighty dollars*. But the Board of Missions, although they have more or less missionaries in nearly all the Western and Southern States of the Union, *never allow a single dollar by way of outfit*—nor do they find it “*necessary*” in any case to become responsible for more than *one-half* the ordinary missionary pay, or \$200 for a year’s service.

It is readily admitted that the A. H. M. Society, as an independent association, has a *right* to pledge its funds in such way as may be most agreeable to its *members*, to whom, alone, as Mr. P. says, they are “*responsible*”—and it is neither our province, nor our intention, to bring any “*charges*” or complaints against them for so doing. But we do claim it as the *right*, and regard it as the *duty* of the Board, and its friends, to present very distinctly to the public, these important points of “*radical difference*” between the plan of *appropriation* adopted by the Board, and the plan of *pledges* and *outfits* chosen by the A. H. M. Society.